

POST-MİLLİYETÇİ AVRUPA BÜTÜNLEŞMESİ İÇİNDE AVRO-KUŞKUCULUĞUN ROLÜ: AVRUPA ÖZGÜRLÜK VE DEMOKRASİ GRUBU VAKA ANALİZİ*

THE ROLE OF EUROSCEPTICISM IN POST-NATIONAL EUROPEAN INTEGRATION: CASE STUDY OF THE EUROPE OF FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY GROUP

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Özet

Bu makalede Avrupa bütünleşme süreci yanında, post-milliyetçi boyutun bir parçası olduğu savunulan, Avro-kuşkuculuk kavramı üzerinde durulmaktadır. Makalede savunulduğu üzere *hoşgörülü fikir birliği* ya da *müsaadeci fikir birliği* olarak bilinen tezlerinin zayıflamasıyla ulusal ve yerel düzeydeki siyaset, Avrupa düzeyine ve alanına yayılmaya başlayan bir siyasal rekabete dönüşmüştür. Fakat makalede Avro-kuşkuculuk, Avro-istekli görüşe karşıt olmak bir yana, her iki görüşünde aslında siyasal çekişmeyi besleyen bir madalyonun iki yüzü olarak ele alınmıştır. Bu sebeple Avro-kuşkuculuk pro-Avrupacılık görüşünden ayrı değerlendirilmek yerine Avro-istekli görüş ile paylaşılan ve paylaşılmayan değerler veyahut kaygılar üzerinden ele alınmıştır. Makalede bu zıtlasma yapıcı ve pozitif olarak değerlendirilirken bu hipotezi doğrulamak adına Avrupa Özgürlük ve Demokrasi grubu dikkate çekilmiştir. Vaka analizinde ele alındığı üzere Avrupa Özgürlük ve Demokrasi grubu, Avrupa Birliğini mutlak reddeden bir görüş içinde olmamakla beraber, Avrupa Birliği yönetim biçimini (rejimi) eleştirmekte ve bunun sonucunda gelecekteki Avrupa senaryoları için önemli olan demokratik gereklilikleri – dâhil olma, katılım gösterme, yanıt üretme – yerine getirmek adına bu denklem içinde önemi giderek artmaktadır. Avrupa Özgürlük ve Demokrasi grubu geleneksel ulusal anlayış dışına taşan tutumları ve bunun sonucunda post-milliyetçi

*Bu makale Crosscheck sistemi tarafından taranmış ve bu sistem sonuçlarına göre orijinal bir makale olduğu tespit edilmiştir.

siyasal ekiřmenin nemli bir parası haline gelen ve zaman zaman katı bir muhalefet iinde zaman zaman ise diren ve baskı gsteren bir hareket iinde ele alınmıřtır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Avro-kuřkuculuk, Avrupa kamusal alanı, Post-milliyetilik, Siyasal ekiřme, Avrupa zgrlk ve Demokrasi Grubu.

Abstract

The article focuses on the concept ‘Euroscepticism’, as a part of an evolving post-national dimension, alongside the European integration. As argued in this article, the death of the *permissive consensus* has directly opened up the domestic political spaces to a European-wide political contestation. However, Euroscepticism is not handled contrary to Euro-enthusiasm in this article solely, but both are evaluated as the two sides of the same coin feeding the political contestation in Europe. That is why Euroscepticism is not segregated from pro-Europeanism, but rather separated by the concerns shared or not shared with that of Euro-enthusiasm. The article emphasizes this antagonism as constructive and positive and for testing this hypothesis the article concentrates on the Europe of Freedom and Democracy group. As outlined in the case study, the Eurosceptic Europe of Freedom and Democracy group is not into an absolute denial of the EU, but approaching critically the EU governance structures (regime) as a result becoming an important part within this equation for fulfilling the democratic requirements in a way of-inclusiveness, participation and responsiveness- all urgently required for future European scenarios. The Europe of Freedom and Democracy group is acknowledged as a movement in opposition, resisting and pressuring the developments at different levels and scope, which exceeds the traditional national understanding, as well as becoming an important part of the post-national political contestation.

Key Words: Euroscepticism, European Public Space, Post-nationalism, Political Contestation, Europe of Freedom and Democracy Group.

Introduction

As argued in this article, opposite to general belief, Euroscepticism is not actually the desire for the demolition of the EU. It is about questioning the form, or the process, the integration is heading towards. That is why, if the EU is willing to fully include the people of Europe, it certainly needs to consider their desires. As Milner puts it, according to a Louis Harris poll (1999), “*Europeans want more Europe, but a different Europe*” (MILNER, 2000:2). While this argument reveals the issue, it does not provide a solution, which will be the main question tackled within this article. The question tackled in this article is ‘what is the influence of Euroscepticism on the functioning of the European Union’; does it discourage the European integration? Or can both Euroscepticism and Euro-enthusiasm go hand in hand, which this article

addresses they are supplementary in creating post-national politics in the European Parliament (EP) debated by scholars such as Bartolini (2005) as “*critical capital of political structuring*” in Europe. This is important in view of the further development of the European Union.

Euroscepticism is approached on the definition of transnationalism as “*multiple ties and interactions linking both people and/or institutions across the borders of the Member States in the EU*” (VERTOVEC, 1999:448), irrespective of their race, ethnicity, nation, political ideology, etc., who find common grounds on divisions, contradictions, and desires. The study of Euroscepticism mainly circles around the ideology vs. strategy dichotomy. Although supporting the latter, the article, evaluates the trajectory of Euroscepticism along European integration willing to provide an analysis of this phenomenon as an emerging post-national dimension, rather than an indicator or reflection of nationalist ideology. This emerging post-national attitude or relation is actually a step towards creating a European public sphere, where political dialogue and public opinion are becoming more transnational (HABERMAS, 2001:73–4). The question this study aims to answer is—will the European integration manage to overcome the affects of nationalism by moving towards a post-national system, or a constitutional pacifist order? The post-national dimension, as argued throughout this article, is certainly not debating an established or an emerging post-national state. There are different visions with regard to the post-national European thesis (See, for example, GIDDENS, 1994; ARCHIBUGI and KÖHLER, 1998; HABERMAS, 2006). What is argued in the name of a ‘post-national’ dimension is the emerging level of a political space above the national-level, which is analyzed under politics beyond the nation-state concerned with a sum of interests, aspirations, reservations, resistances, etc. competing with one another and becoming salient at the EU level. Differing from national integration as ‘belonging together’, post-national integration is about ‘sense of belonging’ towards a polity. As Habermas argues, “*post nationalist democratic institutions depends not on the possibility of forging a new unified national identity corresponding to these institutions, but the interactions between the various publics, which must exercise discursive control over formal democratic institutions*” (1998:301).

The typology developed by Kopecky and Mudde (2002) is used in the present study, as it correlates with the argument of the article. According to the typology, there are four general types of party position—*Euro-enthusiasts*, *Eurosceptics*, *Europragmatists* and *Eurorejects*. *Europhiles*, who are simultaneously Euro-enthusiasts and EU optimists, approve of European integration and are optimistic towards the trajectory of EU development. On the other hand, Eurosceptics, who are both Europhiles and EU pessimists, favour European integration in principle, while criticizing the actual development of the EU (KOPECKY and MUDDE, 2002:303). That is why Euroscepticism is seen from the right to the left of the political spectrum. The concept

of 'Euroscepticism' or 'Eurosceptic'—named as such in political context—could be either leftist or rightist, including ecologists, as well as libertarians. Similarly, according to religious view, they could be perceived as Protestants or Catholics, atheists or orthodox; and in terms of social standards or culture, a blue or white collar, ethno-nationalists or even post-nationalists. *"The giant is fast asleep because those who could wake it up generally have no incentive to do so and those who have an incentive cannot"* (GREEN, 2012:115). As the abovementioned metaphor from Green marks, there is an ongoing contestation between the ones whom are pushing towards more European integration, on the other hand the ones trying to develop different political demands (democratically) and steps to be taken in the name of Europe. According to Müller this is about *"ways of agreeing to disagree"* (2012:60). Besides these counter political movements, in which the focus in this article is given to a Eurosceptic party group, it is important to understand how Euroscepticism contributes to the general perception of the EU. The aim of this article is to measure empirically how Euroscepticism is formed on what conditions and composed of what kind of discourses in the name of projecting the concerns of the political parties and their electorate. In the heart of this debate lies the well known discussion of 'deliberative democracy'. The question and the connection between Euroscepticism and the 'democratic deficit' brings the issue to the analysis of the political parties and how actually the issues related with the integration are finally giving signals of an emerging politicization at EU level. For such an assessment, a survey of the Europe of Freedom and Democracy (EFD) group is evaluated with data of party working documents as well as the discourses of the Members of the European Parliament (MEP's) within a period of 2009-2014.

EUROSCEPTICISM AS AN EMERGING ASPECT OF POST-NATIONAL POLITICS

It is important to state that Euroscepticism more or less is seen in a quite a few parties at both national and EU levels. If not a strict opposition of the EU, certain criticisms or at least a questioning of the integration is witnessed, whether this be specifically *"immigrant-sceptic"* (RYAGREN, 2008), *"demo-sceptic"* (CONVERSI, 2008) attitudes or more generally an explicit challenge to the whole EU. The EFD group remains one the leading parties on reflecting Euroscepticism both at national and EU levels, and does not hesitate to manifest Euroscepticism (in speeches, declarations, party manifestos etc).

Surrounded by a general understanding, Euroscepticism is surely not only about 'the politics of opposition'. Linking Euroscepticism directly to a negative meaning of 'rejection' is a mistake of both understanding Euroscepticism and the European integration. According to Fligstein et al., *"Eurosceptics are supporters of basic EU principles but are also simultaneously harsh anti-EU critics"* (2012:115). This is why Euroscepticism will not be solely linked to 'patterns of opposition' within this article. When analyzed, Euroscepticism itself is divided under different categories. For instance, Taggart and Szczarbiak (2008) have introduced a typology of *soft* and *hard* Euroscepticism. According to their definition, soft Eurosceptics are the ones who do

not have a principled objection to the EU, do not support withdrawal from the EU, and only express opposition on specific policies, which they name as sensitive issues. On the other hand, hard Eurosceptics are, those who oppose European integration, they prefer staying outside the EU, and oppose nearly all the policies brought along with the integration process (TAGGART and SZCZERBIAK, 2008:7-8).

Without distinguishing a soft or hard type of Euroscepticism, the aim of this article is to evaluate of how Euroscepticism contributes to the post-national dimension. For this reason, it is important to underline that the focus of this study is to locate Euroscepticism as a part of the political contestation in Europe, rather than a marginal type of opposition. The EU, by absorbing further policy domains, welcoming new Member States, and strengthening its competences, is likely to be criticized both at elite and public level. This is and will in the future be an important merit of this political system. As stated above, the EU is not a state; it does not have a government and yet does not have an opposition in that manner. As a result, the structure of the EU, with increased deepening and widening, is forcing a strict polarization becoming to be more clearly manifested, which is certainly required for post-national democracy, or namely deliberative democracy. The EU is trying to bring together a divergence of political differences however in doing this on which Tully adheres importance is that;

"[...there should not be to reach final agreements on universal principles or procedures, but to ensuring that constitutional democracies are always open to the democratic freedom of calling into question and presenting reasons for the renegotiation of the prevailing rules of law, principles of justice and practices of deliberation]" (TULLY, 2002:218).

Euroscepticism is situated at the intersection between the national and European levels, mapping critical responses to the integration process. However, the contents of these responses exceed the narrow forms of the 'national', and grasp broader understandings of the interests in a post-national environment, as Euroscepticism does not emerge from a general national pattern. The ubiquitous character of Euroscepticism has started attracting parties from different political backgrounds. At this point, the European integration is crosscutting the nation, with emerging movements like Euroscepticism affecting a range of political parties across the EU Member States. As Derrida argues, *"a 'new international spirit', a link of affinity in suffering has already come into being as the nemesis of the dominant transnationalism"* (1994:52-3). While post-nationalism does not disregard the national (ethnic, racial, cultural, and religious) differences, it does not also use them for drawing distinctions.

As debated in this article, public spheres have become increasingly divided and fragmented with the European integration, and they have even gained more momentum under competing and diverging political parties. Even though Euroscepticism contains doubts and reservations, as detailed below, this article prompts a discussion on *"a proof of the existence of a European public sphere of*

debate formed by diverging spheres... which even when nationally or regionally defined has a European frame of reference" (TRANDAFOIU, 2006:95).

The main arguments put forth under the post-national thesis are based on the transformation of the nation-state. According to the transformation of the role/function of the state, several scholars, including Pierson (2001a) and Scharpf and Schmidt (2000), are debating the growing internationalization and de-regulation of economies that have decreased the role and instruments of the states to control their political economies (*Cited in* JAEGER and KVIST, 2003:561). The post-national thesis about the future of the nation-state draws upon certain theories put forth, such as the 'de-territorialisation'ⁱⁱ among boundaries, the 'de-limitation'ⁱⁱⁱ of the state (power), and the 'de-hierarchisation'^{iv} between the state and the society on the one hand, and the state and the meta-state institutions on the other (in our case EU institutions) (Goetz and Hix, 2001:22). According to Bell, *"the agenda of the nation-state is also now under general scrutiny, where we are at present existing in an in-between state, or rather in-between states, where a sense of insecurity and immanent change now pervades"* (2004:125). In the case of Europe, this opening up of the national level, thanks to the European integration, has introduced the establishment of transnational political parties such as Euro-enthusiast or Eurosceptic political groups within the EP. As argued in this article, this political contestation has given rise to a rich debate polarizing both positions.

Bartolini, who makes reference to *pro* and *anti*-Europeanism, emphasizes that *"in the European post-war electoral history there is no other single theme which has had similar large and standardizing effects across the European party system"* (2005:319). This emphasizes how widely these attitudes are used, accepted, and manipulated in contemporary European politics. This highlights the issue of the competing strategies pushing for deeper integration, or resisting or abstaining from it. It is evident that European integration, in its *"various aspects, whether economic, cultural or political, results in a diversity of forms for different members of the national community"* (e.g., new forms of conflict are created) (TEPEROGLOU and TSATSANIS, 2011:2-3). According to Risse (2003), this is required in the name of a European public sphere, which this article assumes as already functioning in a post-national integration. For instance;

"Contestation is a crucial pre-condition for the emergence of a European public sphere rather than an indicator for its absence. ... If political issues are not contested, if European politics remains the business of elites, the attention level for Europe and the EU will remain low. European issues must become salient and significant in the various public debates so that a European public sphere can emerge" (RISSE, 2003:6).

It is more important to note that these competing interests push aside the 'national' rhetoric to justify the cause in a European sphere, which becomes post-national, including 'diverse human coalitions, groups and projects'. According to Trandafoiu, *"Micro politics discuss events that all have a European significance, simultaneously, and with cross national references. So despite widespread worries about overwhelming scepticism and the future of the European project, several counter points need to be raised"* (2006:97).

Every move or step taken forward in the name of integration opens up a debate between parties demonstrating Euro-enthusiasm or Euroscepticism. That is why the issue cannot be framed within a 'defence of the national', as the *"European level becomes more relevant and appropriate than the national, and the parties expect transnational political answers to these issues"* (FERON, 2004:124). The issues cannot be framed in a national framework and are not shared by the 'nation' in a cohesive manner, because they become linked to a European dimension (supranational decision-making, involvement of EU institutions, other Member States/parties etc).

POST-NATIONAL COLLABORATION: EUROPE OF FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY GROUP

Tackling post-nationalism in Europe requires attention to the European integration, and this leads to analyzing the party attitudes towards the integration that appears to be post-national in nature. The questions of *why* and *how* will be answered below that would help our understanding of Euroscepticism and its contribution to the post-national dimension. Firstly, in nearly all EU member states, as well as non-EU countries (Norway and Switzerland etc.), Euroscepticism can be witnessed. Hence, it can not be attributed to one or a few member states, which makes it particularly significant. The situation is clear at party level, as the Eurosceptic parties form Euro-party groups in the European Parliament. They establish common policy guidelines, principles, and common grounds, as well as point to common criticisms, and vote coherently in their Euro-party group. For this reason, Kriesi reminds that, *"the integration in its various forms is perceived differently by members of the national community, and as a result creates similarities as well as disparities and new forms of conflict or settlement"* (2008:3). Because of these outcomes, Wilkinson (2002) argues that it is difficult to filter the perceptions into a single perspective or holistic assessment of the European project. For this very reason the EFD group studied below is approached on how the party group contributes to the political contestation in the EU.

The EFD group is a Euro-party sharing national conservatism and Euroscepticism. The group is formed after the EP elections in 2009, which mostly was a part of the former group of Union for Europe of the Nations (UEN) in the EP. The party group now contains eleven political parties^v, lead by the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP) (9 MEP's), which consist of total 33 MEP's. UKIP is the only one out of these parties to demand withdrawal from the EU in the EFD group contradicting itself.

Since the party is established after the 2009 EP elections, the Euro-party does not have an election manifesto to analyze their common critics on the European integration. However the party has introduced a short programme laying down the interests and goals the party seeks to defend. The issues of democracy and legitimacy

are very often rehearsed by the EFD group for instance according to the party programme;

“Committed to the principles of democracy, freedom and co-operation among Nation States, the Group favors an open, transparent, democratic and accountable co-operation among sovereign European States and rejects the bureaucratization of Europe and the creation of a single centralized European super-state” (Statutes of the EFD, 2009:3).

The group criticizes the characteristics of the supranational Union with the abovementioned lack of democracy and legitimacy, offering to meet the values of democracy and accountability at EU level, strongly criticizing the bureaucratization. As underlined in the above quotation the EFD group argues that a great extent of democracy has vanished at the national level, however not created at EU level. MEP Nigel Farage demonstrates this in accusing the European Commission members;

“By any objective measure, the euro is a failure. Who is actually responsible? Who is in charge out of you lot? Well of course the answer is none of you, because none of you have been elected. None of you actually have any democratic legitimacy for the roles that you currently hold within this crisis [...] You should all be held accountable for what you have done. You should all be fired” (EP Speech, November 16, 2011).

For instance, indicating the European Commission as an over bureaucratic institution and criticizing its right to initiate legislation (the only institution having right to propose Community Law) remains one of the most important critics the party group questions. This is seen as a prerogative action only reserved for the European Commission, which makes the MEP's question their assignment as *“why am I elected”* (Nigel Farage, Public Speech, 2009). This opens up a self-questioning of the MEP's on their duties and responsibilities within the EU project which they argue to be undemocratic. That is why, the article finds these arguments as valuable as the group puts forth that democracy is a process, not actually a set of norms and procedures to be dominated by an institution, namely the European Commission. For instance MEP Jaroslav Paska argues of a need to establish *“better communication between the European Council and the European Parliament so the two institutions complement each other... an inter-institutional agreement would help if it defined precisely the relationship between the European Council and the European Parliament”* (EP Speech, December 11, 2013).

Nigel Farage, the Co-president of the EFD group has recently stated that *“Mr. Van Rompuy, the president of the European Council, an unelected man, does not represent the interests of the EU”* (EP, November 16, 2011). A European citizen, having not much interest in EU politics, after reading the quoted statement above, would think of UKIP to be one of the most Euro-enthusiast party groups in the EP; fetching for a post-national democratic Union (pointing to the unelected post of the President of the European Council), as well as watching over the interests of the EU. Although, the fact remains opposite, as currently UKIP is a part of a Eurosceptic EFD group in the EP.

As argued in this article, the increasing level of political contestation includes different views from the Eurosceptic parties containing both positive and negative European arguments. For instance Nigel Farage argues *"we are Europeans, and proud of it. It is this centralized, homogenized EU, which is anti-European"* (Nigel Farage, Public interview, October 18, 2012). This view makes reference to a Europeanism where anti-democratic formations having no place in Europe as well as not meeting with the European values and norms. Similarly MEP Philippe de Villiers argues *"your dream of the merging of European nations by integration, the dream of the post-national elites has melted away in the hearts of the people... because it was rapped up in a tissue of lies"* (EP Speech, February 5, 2013). Understood from these speeches, the EFD group creates pressure on what they call 'elitist parties' to respect the fundamental values of Europe. It is clear that the EFD group attacks and pressures the bureaucratic nature of the EU involving a Europeanism clashing over with that of the current EU policies and institutions (See, MÜLLER, 2007). Addressed in this study as post-nationalism, embodying diversity rather than a replication of uniformity and for this very reason the group is pressuring against any uniform effects for the overall Europeans. That is why the group emphasizes universality (a combination of accountability, transparency, commitment to social justice etc.) rather than uniformity. The party puts forth attachment to universal values but at the same time drawing resistance to identification. There is a correlation between on the one hand *"claims of nationalism and on the other hand those of international (in our case European) norms and policies"* (HALLIDAY, 2000: 159). As a result, legitimacy is not directly dependent on a collective identity (namely nation) because important decisions are also taken with reference to European norms and values. At the heart of this twofold situation (nation-state vs. European regime) are the Eurosceptics, whom express this dilemma. And, more importantly, as argued in this article, the Eurosceptics, namely the EFD group attempts to build bridges between these two sides, where they draw attention to both the strength as well as the weakness of the EU. For instance, the same criticisms by the EFD group campaigning for 'no' votes were seen during the Lisbon treaty as well. However, afterwards there were positive references made to the treaty. For instance, MEP of the EFD group Morten Messerschmidt argues referencing the Treaty of Lisbon as;

"[...there were two glimmers of light in the Lisbon Treaty. One of these was the Citizens Initiative. That is also why – on behalf of both my party in Denmark and my group here in the European Parliament – I entered into the negotiations precisely with a view to getting the Citizens' Initiative in place, which, in spite of everything, was a tiny glimmer of light in an otherwise very dark and very federal EU" (EP Debate, December 15, 2010).

That is why; the issue is between the federalists vs. intergovernmentalists. There are the ones who are favoring to federalize the Union, and the ones who are favoring to protect the status quo in an intergovernmental structure. However, this

political contestation (contrary to intergovernmental bargaining) is making the issues publicly visible, and as argued in this article, the Eurosceptic parties are assuming an important role in this process. It would be a mistake to acknowledge this process on a pro/anti- EU axis. The Co-president of the EFD group Nigel Farage has stated several times of not being anti-European, but underlying what he argues the anti-democratic EU. In his words;

"[...but it is not, it is democracy. What is sweeping northern Europe now, starting off in April with that amazing result in the Finnish general election, is a new democratic revolution. It is not anti-European. It wants a Europe of trade; it wants a Europe of cooperation; it wants a Europe where we can do student exchanges and we can work in each others' capital cities; it wants those things. But it does not want this European Union model" (EP Speech, September 28, 2011).

The EFD group as well as the parties forming it at national level are against the Lisbon Treaty, currently with the same arguments are opposing the Fiscal Union. More importantly the EFD group worked hard (public speeches supporting the 'no' side, campaigning, publishing information leaflets etc.) to prevent the ratification of the Fiscal Compact Treaty, focusing on the Irish referendum and informing the Irish public through delivering leaflets demonstrating a 'no' to the treaty.

However, the outcome of the referendum is 60.3% 'yes'. After the referendum, EFD Group MEP Paul Nuttall demonstrated *"we in the EFD Group salute those proud Irishmen and women who voted and campaigned for a 'no' vote with noble intentions, for they are Irelands hope"* (June 1, 2012 URL: www.efdgroupp.eu/newsroom). It is stated by the party leader Nigel Farage that it is their goal to defend the interests of the Irish people as well as the Greek (recently for the Fiscal Compact treaty). This exposes one of the dimensions of the group's role in the contestation dimension, as the group does not have any MEP's from either Member States emphasized above; however they assume a role to defend both the Irish and Greek citizens. This signifies the development of the contestation in Europe. Back in 2009, right after the European Parliament elections, the Co-president of the EFD group, Nigel Farage made it clear that *"I'm here to represent the opinions and rights of ordinary Europeans in all the Member States"* (Public Speech, September 29, 2009). It is here important to stress that, the Eurosceptic group is willing to network with people sharing the same interests all around Europe. For that reason, Euroscepticism exceeds the traditional national understanding; in fact, it is one of the hints of the very fragmentation of the nation itself. This brings the issue to the EU eroding the political autonomy of the state and calling into question the efficiency of democracy at Member State level. For Müller; there are two contrasts ahead of Europe *"two negative contrasts namely a contrast of present democracy with the evils of the past (nationalism), and a contrast of present democracy with the real or potential anti-democratic challenges"* (2007:10-11).

These recent trends do not derive from the *"immaturity of democracy, but occur in the process of overcoming the deficits of democracy, and of introducing the people's*

participation...J” (HABA, 2007:6). That is why, it is important to stress that “*dimensions of support of European integration also mark the dimensions of possible resistance*” (TRENZ and DE WILDE, 2012:14). As a result the structure of the EU, with more and more deepening and widening, is forcing a strict polarization becoming more clearly witnessed in European integration. As former President of France, Nicolas Sarkozy has demonstrated “*there are clearly two Europes, there is one which wants more solidarity between its members and regulation, the other is attached solely to the logic of the Single Market*” (BBC, public interview, December 12, 2011).

For instance, a recent critic related with the current crisis has been raised by Nigel Farage, who in one his speeches has argued “*Europe uses every crisis as a pretext to take away another piece of democracy from its members*” (Joint Speech with Vaclav Klaus June 18, 2012). This critic signals the dissatisfaction of the value of democracy in Europe, which is shared by almost all parties in the EP, whether Eurosceptic or Euro-enthusiast.

It is clear that the EFD group evaluates the EU as an intergovernmental form of organization, rather federal. However this is not something new, the challenge stems from, why anti-federalism is synonymously evaluated as anti-European with a negative connotation. It is for sure still not clear in which direction the integration will evolve into, but what remains important as the EFD group puts forth, is whether intergovernmental or a federal form, the decision and consent of the peoples of this very Union is required. According to the party programme;

“...the Group favors that any new treaties or any modification of the existing treaties are to be submitted to the peoples’ vote through free and fair national referenda in the Member States. The Group does believe that the legitimacy of any power comes from the will of its Peoples and their right to be free and democratically ruled” (Statutes of the EFD, 2009:3).

Back in 2009, (right after the European Parliament election), the Co-president of the EFD group, Nigel Farage made it clear “I’m here to represent the opinions and rights of ordinary Europeans in all the Member States” (Public Speech, September 29, 2009). For instance rephrasing the issues of legitimacy, as well as democracy in the EU, it is worth quoting Nigel Farage at length, in his words;

[...at a moment there was a moment and they might have got this European project right, and it was the launching of the Constitution, Giscard d’Estaing great project... and they thought, that they were going to mirror what those great men in America had done back in the 1780’s, and they began to prejudice this wonderful political constitution for the European Union, and I know that many of the Christian groups indeed lobbied very hard to try get it written in to the constitution that is was a christian culture that existed within the EU, of course that did not seem like today. But had they, had the people behind this used the European Constitution as an opportunity to democratise the EU to be honest with the peoples of the EU, about their

intentions to make the government of Europe come from within the elected European Parliament, if they had done those things, they may well, through popular referendums have carried the day. But if you remember that isn't actually what happened is it, that isn't what happened. They determined the leaders not to give referendums, but in the end one or two butted and it was Chirac who butted...] (Speech at the Pro-Europa Christiana Federation, May 31, 2011).

As quoted above, after so many years of the rejection of the draft Constitution treaty, it is important for a Eurosceptic party leader to make reference to the treaty on how worthy it would have been if written down in a more democratic way. A main argument towards the strategy of the Eurosceptic attitude is 'to strongly question the EU legitimacy without proposing any measures for the EU to gain more legitimacy' however, the abovementioned quotation from the Co-president of the EFD group argues the opposite. The abovementioned quotation marks two important criticisms. The first is the emphasis on the missed opportunity of the Constitutional treaty, in which the EU could have been moved towards a more democratic direction. And the second point is, the suggestion and (would be) the result of the former, which is bringing out the executive (namely the European Commission) directly from the EP.

This contestation is urgently needed for deepening the democratic public life in Europe. According to Wilkinson it is this nature of integration (normative, functional or territorial) which is the "*subject of constant flux, frequent contestation and occasional differentiation...*" (2002). There are many motives behind the integration (economic, legal, cultural, foreign policy) it is impossible to place them all into a single framework. For that reason there is a result of competing interests. This is important, as the more contestation increases, the more EU institutions, governments in office, opposition parties etc become melted into a political debate, and as a result the more this becomes, the more the media draws attention and citizens become informed.

As debated in the case study above, perceptions towards Europe can not be handled in an 'all-or-nothing' dimension. There are different doubts and reservations put forth by Eurosceptic parties in the name of future European projects. As a result, what remains important is that, the issues become politicized both at national and European levels and, are not bounded within a Member State solely. This leads to the questioning of 'what kind of Europe' debate. A Christian Europe versus a 'secular Europe' or, a 'communitarian' versus a 'cosmopolitan Europe' or even a model of a 'social Europe' versus a 'neo-liberal Europe'. It is clear that parties have different interests and objectives on the EU project. However, as analyzed in the case study above, Eurosceptic parties or party groups should not be pushed aside because of their sceptic political attitude. As argued in the article this firstly helps to remove the taboo against critical views towards the integration. And, as an outcome of this improves the political debates in the EU to focus on the contents of common policies, making them more transparent. Euroscepticism and Euro-enthusiasm do not provide the basis for a "*bridging political consensus*" (barrowing this interpretation from Soysal, 2001:175) but

rather a basis for contestation. Disagreements need to be taken into consideration and incorporated in this emerging post-national political level, on what Bellamy and Castiglione argue should rest on *“no false homogenizing but rather a realistic discontent that forces the polity to adapt itself and recognize, respect and represent the values, opinions and vital interests of its members”* (2008:175-7).

In developing these debates, parties make use of different channels of contestation. And the political parties of Europe, gain a chance of constantly *“negotiate and to decide how much they wish to share and how much they wish to keep apart”* (MÜLLER, 2007:125). This does not mean that the national governments and their administrations are replaced or absorbed by a European mega state or a bureaucracy or whatever we might call it, instead they form a part of a complex and differentiated mix of political and institutional arrangements. EU institutions become what Wessels argues *“agents for efficient and effective policy-making,”* developing their own *“institutional ambitions”* (WESSELS, 2007:294). These institutions are driven by the dynamics of an increasing participation by an increasing number of actors, leading in turn to a high degree of complexity and differentiation in decision-making procedures which leads to becoming a proponent of either Euroscepticism and/or Euro-enthusiasm.

CONCLUSION

The process of European integration at this point has two clear effects on these parties reflecting resistance. Firstly, it moderates the ideological distance and forces these parties to take collective action in the form of transnational party federations. Second, it highlights and gives political visibility to the common new agenda of these parties on issues such as identity, ecology, the democratization of the EU, or the resistance towards immigration or multiculturalism. Establishing more coherent views towards the European integration brings these parties more closely to each other leading to cross party working programmes, receiving support from each other in national elections, or criticizing each others political attitudes etc. The opening space between the national arenas as well as in the EP forces political parties to participate actively or passively to legitimize their decisions. However in doing this, they put forth their own claims which they argue represent the masses and in this way respond to the needs of the contemporary society.

It is the Eurosceptics whom are currently competing with other strategies in the name of their future trajectory of the EU, however not in a national but in the post-national way, as firstly the politics they pursue do not overlap with their government policies (assuming the Eurosceptic phenomenon in a weaker position) and not shared by the whole nation, in which the Eurosceptic phenomenon has become a common ground between parties and movements reflecting critical attitudes from different EU Member States. In sum, the Eurosceptic parties with the goal of resisting, unifying and totalizing strategies help develop the post-national European political space.

Endnotes

ⁱ Shin Chiba classifies pacifism under different types; the fourth type of pacifism “is the recent ‘global peace and justice movement.’ This newer type of pacifism, based on a global citizens’ network for peace, justice, and human rights, is usually carried out by various types of NGO groups and voluntary associations. This type of pacifism can be called *network pacifism* or *grassroots pacifism* and it can now be observed beyond the borders of the nation-states”, **Peace Movements and Pacifism after September 11**, Shin Chiba (ed.), Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, UK, 2008, pp. 128-136

ⁱⁱ The concept ‘De-territorialisation’ was first introduced by Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari in **Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia**, Canada: Penguin Group, 1977. The concept here is linked to the notion of ‘in-betweenness’. Bhabha’s “notion of in-betweenness refers to a creative ‘third’ space between traditional readings of the nation and readings of resistance, ‘in betweenness’ refers to the general instability of nations and the potential restructuring of national identity”. See Homi K. Bhabha, **The Location of Culture**, London: Routledge, 1994. For Bell, de-territorialisation, and more specifically, an ‘ethics of de-territorialisation’ provides “a purposeful means of interconnecting the breakdown of territory with new possibilities of belonging, where there is at work a break from the traditionally accepted community”. See Eleanor Bell, **Questioning Scotland Literature, Nationalism, Postmodernism**, New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2004

ⁱⁱⁱ De-limitation here signifies the debate upon whether the nation-state is the sole unit of legitimacy within an entity, such as the EU. For post-nationalists, the links between certain units (e.g., political parties, pressure groups, private foundations, business networks, etc.) have surpassed the limit of the states. See, Keith Breen and Shane O’Neill, **After the Nation? Critical Reflections on Nationalism and Post Nationalism**, UK: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010

^{iv} De-hierarhisation is used synonymously with the concept of heterarchy defining the institutional structure of the EU as well as the relation between the state and meta-state institutions. Crumley defines the heterarchy “... as the relation of elements to one another when they are unranked or when they possess the potential for being ranked in a number of different ways” See, Carole Crumley, **Heterarchy and the Analysis of Complex Societies**. In Ehrenreich with Crumley and Levy, 1995:1-5.

^v Apart from the United Kingdom Independence Party, the Europe of Freedom and Democracy Group contains MEP’s from; The Northern League (Italy), Danish People’s Party (Denmark), True Finns (Finland), Movement For France (France), Popular Orthodox Rally (Greece), Order and Justice party (Lithuania), Reformed Political Party (Netherlands), Slovak National Party (Slovakia), United Poland (Poland) Io amo l’Italia (Italy).

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